

**IS TARAWEEH 8 OR 20 RAK'ATS
ACCORDING TO SOME HANAFI
ULAMA OR NOT?**

**THE FATWA OF THE LATE MUFTI
SAYYID ABDUR RAHIM LAJPURI
IN REFUTATION OF
THE CLAIMS OF
ABDUL JALEEL SAMRODI
"AL-SALAFI" AND HIS MUQALLIDUN**

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Translated by: Prof. MF Quraishi
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TWENTY-RAK'AH TARAVEEH

AN INSISTED SUNNAH

Samrodhi Sahib's Objections and Their Detailed Refutation.

(238) Q. : Honourable Mufti Sahib, Peace be on you and divine mercy and blessings !

The reason for giving trouble to your honour is this that a *non-muqallid* moulvi, Abdu'l Jaleel Samrodi (i.e., of Samrod, Gujarat) has created commotion by averring that the Taraveeh of more than eight rak'ahs is not provable. His advertisement has appeared in a Gujarati newspaper, *Pratap*, in which he has challenged that the proof of twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh, on the authority of the Holy Prophet (pbuh.!), cannot be adduced even from a "week" hadith.

Samrodhi Sahib has also cited references from juridical books of the Hanafites, like *Tahtavi*, *Maraqi u'l-Falah*, *Fath u'l-Qadir*, *'Aiyni*, *Kabiri*, etc., etc., saying that these books do not contain any proof on the Holy Prophet's authority about the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh. He has also quoted passages from these books.

The same Samrodi Sahib has stated in his book entitled *Nabi ki Namaz* as under :

"Friends ! There is no doubt whatsoever that the honourable Prophet has never said twenty rak'ahs. However, the people [Companions] have afterwards said more 20 (rak'ahs). Now, what is to be considered and decided justly is this whether the Holy Lord

has enjoined on us to submit to and obey the honourable Prophet or the people [Companions]? Has the Holy Lord bestowed on any one of the *ummah* the right of establishing the religion, Islam and the law? So, do not be deceived by the people's [Companions'] saying the Taraveeh in excess (20 rak'ahs). (*Nabi ki Namaz*, in Gujarati, p. 54).

Kindly elucidate regarding the 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh; there is much anxiety and distraction among the people here¹.

The Answer (By the Most high Allah's help and guidance).

Today when the majority of Muslims is lax in saying prayers and does not attend the Taraveeh, when mosques are desolate and cinema-houses are full, what sort of service is this of Islam, this misleading discussion, this challenge?

Couplet: If the teacher and the jurist be such!

Adieu! O religious practice. Farewell! O religious piety. It is regrettable that precisely at the time when calamities were befalling the Muslims of Jabalpur and the Muslims all over the country, distressed at their brethren's plight, were anxiously thinking of helping the poor victims, Samrodi Sahib was throwing challenge upon challenge for winning a thousand-rupee prize by proving the authenticity of the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh.

Couplet: May God not give such pervert understanding to any one!

May He give death but not this sort of mind!

Such unbecoming actions of his have brought his party ignominy and hence the sensible and sober member thereof are disgusted with him and have begun to call and write him "Samiri" (the crafty hypocrite of Moses' time) instead of Samrodi. The esteemed editor of the newspaper, *Tarjuman*, Delhi, in its issue of October 1, 1957,

1. Similar questions have been put to the mufti Sahib by Hakim, Ahmed Mian, Hafiz Ghulam Muhammad, Shaykh Muhammad, Chichi Surti, Mr. Abdu'sh-Shakoor, etc. For fear of prolixity all have not been copied here; only their synopsis has been given. (Compiler).

writing under the caption, *Fitna-e Samiri* (Samiri's Mischief), says that "this strange man's peculiarity is that he loves—it is his wont—to kick up rows. The particulars of his life consist in exciting tumults, fanning apprehensions and mischiefs and stirring storms in a still atmosphere. His appellation (Samrodi) has become the reminder of the mischief-monger and wrong-doer Samiri." (Moulvi Habibu'r-Rahman A'zamis *Rak'at u'l-Taraveeh*, new ed., pp. 7-8).

Also notice Samrodi Sahib's raving against Maulana Thanau'llah, the leader of the Ahl-e Hadith (those who conform to the Hadith):

"Maulana Thanau'llah was never an Ahl-e Hadith by faith; by faith he was a Mu'atazilah Jahmiyah and a naturalist." (Vide *Tarjuman*, Delhi, Oct. 15, 1957).

Those who lack the right type of knowledge and understanding, are self-conceited and have little intelligence and imperfect comprehension of (religious) sciences; those who have before them only a nebulous reality and a mere shadow of religion—which they consider perfect religion; such are the persons who sow the seeds of dissension and stir up mischief, Maulana Rum says:

"The hand of an imperfect man is the hand of the perverse Satan and of fraud, because this devil happens to be embroiled in the snare of duty."

The Khwarij (Heretics) possessed but imperfect and superficial knowledge, having only a hazy idea of the reality of religion and yet they considered it perfect religion. Making a Quaranic verse

إِنْ أَحْكَمَ اللَّهُ an excuse, they accused the well-guided caliph, Hazrat 'Ali (Abph.!) of —God forbid!—committing disobedience to the Holy Quran and hence—God forbid!—dubbed him as well as other Companions infidels and then raised the standard of revolt

1. A man of defective knowledge is apparently a human being who is subject to the dictates of the Law and he, apparently, also acts according to them, but his inner self is a demon or jinn who, being in captivity, is constrained to obey orders but he does so without sincerity. Hence, he who gave his hand into the hands of such a defective person, he virtually entrusted himself to Satan. (May God protect us!)

against him. The Quran was on their tongues but their hearts were devoid of its effect and their crude minds were unable to grasp its meaning. It was about them that the Holy Prophet (pbuh.!) had prophesied: "They will read the Quran but it will not go further than their collar-bones" (i.e., neither this reading will affect their hearts nor will it be acceptable to God). (Bukhari).

Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas (Abph.!) went to remonstrate with them and asked them: "What is your objection against Hazrat 'Ali?" They replied: "He makes people arbiters in the matter of religion and relies upon human decision which is open contravention of the Quran; whereas the Quran says: **ان الحكم الا لله** "Arbitration belongs to none save God." Ibn 'Abbas said: "But the Quran itself enjoins to make a human-being an arbiter. For instance, if some one kills a game in the state of *ahram*, the Holy Lord has ordained forfeit for it: i.e., "the like of the killed animal", and has ordered to entrust the task of making a decision about the resemblance to two just Muslims: **يُحْكَمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ** ("the judge to be two men among you known for justice", Surah V *Al-Mai'dah*: 95). Similarly, in the case of conflict between husband and wife, the divine directive is: **فَاْتَعَرُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ اٰهْلِهَا** ("Appoint an arbiter from his folk and an arbiter from her folk." Surah IV *Nisa* 35).

Without understanding the meaning and purport of the Quran Samrodi Sahib, too, goes on reciting the words:

اِطِيعُوا اللهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ

("Obey God and obey the Prophet") and shouts himself hoarse, saying: "Hadith! Hadith!" but he shuts his eyes to the other Quranic verses, Hadiths and the Companions' practice.

The Khwarij had called Hazrat 'Ali and his great followers misguided but Samrodi Sahib has got the better of them by proving that all those men of faith and orthodoxy who have been saying twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh for the last thirteen hundred years—the great Companions, Followers-on (*taba'een*), Followers of Followers (*tab'a taba'een*), holy saints and great spiritual guides of the Path, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi'i, Imam Malik, Imam Ahmed ibn

Hanbal, etc.—were opponents, of the Sunnah and the Hadith and (God forbid!) misguided people; and he calls it self-deception if, conforming to the Companions' practice, 20-rak-ah Taraveeh is said! (May God protect us from such things!) Couplets:—

"We witnessed the completion of revolution in the Garden of Time: To-day even Korah dubs Hatim a curmudgeon!"

The school-boy calls Abu Hanifa ignorant! The lantern is holding a torch to the luminous moon!

The man suffering from leucoderma is finding a hundred faults with Joseph's beauty! The ant, having grown wings, is calling the elephant a mere trifle! The Trinitarians are calling Monotheism polytheism. The Bible says the Protected Tablet is interpolated! Samiri calls Moses (son of 'Imran) a sorcerer! The abecedarians are pointing out the rector's ignorance! The Arab horse has been wounded under the pack-saddle, while a gold collar is the proof of honour for the donkey!

Moulvi Samrodi Sahib's advertisement and challenge remind one of those who quote: **لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ** (Draw not near unto prayer". Surah IV *Nisa*: 43) and omit the words: **وَاَنْتُمْ شَارِبِي** ("when ye are drunken." Ibid.); or of those, who, in wild eagerness for wine, may omit the words **وَلَا تُشْرَبُوا** and repeat **كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا** ("eat and drink") again and again. Akbar Allahabadi, quoting such prate of self-oblivious persons, has well retorted: "(Argument); We shall renounce wine and kebab only if the words **كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا** may not have occurred in the Quran."

"(Answer): We shall accept your statement, sir, if there is no **كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا** after **وَلَا تُشْرَبُوا**."

God preserve us! The daring and audacity Samrodi Sahib has adopted and gone to the extreme! In his advertisement he has dared to give references to *Tahtavi*, *Ishbah*, *Maraqi u'l-Falah*. Maulana Muhammad Qasim's *Maktubat*, Maulana Anver Shah's *Arf-u'sh Shazzi*, 'Allamah Ibn Humam's *Fath u'l-Qadir*, 'Allamah 'Aiyi's *Sharh-e-*

Bukhari, Allahmah Helabi's *Kabiri*, Mulla 'Ali Qari's *Mirqat* and the *Tahavi* but what is strange and astonishing that the passages quoted by him in support of his argument are all incomplete, garbled and contradictory of the original aim and purpose (of the above-named authors).

"What a bold thief! He carries a lamp in his hands!" Please note the following examples from each of the afore-said books and appreciate his audacity:—

(1) **Tahtavi**: Discussing at length, 'Allamah Tahtavi writes: "On the authority of Ibn Abbas' statement, twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh have been established from the Holy Prophet's (pbuh.!) practice." (*Tahtvai's Sharh-e Durr-e Mukhtar*, vol. i, p. 466). He also says: "Twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh with ten 'salams' are successive, i.e, it is being performed todate continuously since the times of the pious ancestors" (*Ibid*, p. 468).

(2) **Maraqi u'l-Falah**: It states: 'The Taraveeh' is an insisted Sunnah and, according to the Companions' consensus (*ijma'*), it has twenty rak'ahs with ten 'salams, which continues todate without break since the ancestors' times." (*Ch. Taraveeh*, p. 81).

(3) **Al-Ishbah Wa'n-Naza'ir**: "The Taraveeh consists of twenty rak'ahs with ten salams",. (*Ishbah ma'e Sharh-e Hamavi*, p. 74).

(4) **Lata'if-e Qasimi**: Maulana Muhammad Qasim writes in *Lata'if-e Qasimi*:

Answer (1) What the honourable Companions have practised continuously becomes an insisted sunnah according to the Holy Prophet's statement: "Follow my sunnah and that of my well-guided caliphs." (*Letter* 3. p. 16).

Answer (2). In sum, the proof of twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh has been established by the Companions' consensus during the later period of Hazrat 'Umar's regime; hence it is a sunnah and he who denies its (20-rak'ah Taraveeh's) being a sunnah, is in the wrong. (p. 9). Besides, there is, in *Tasfiyat u'l-Aqaid*, a decree given by Muhammad Qasim which will be cited in the end along with the question. (Vide p. 265 of this translation).

(5) **'Allamah Anver Shah Kashmiri**: It is stated in his published lecture, *Tirmizi al-ma'ruf ba—Arfa'sh-Shazzi*: Not even one of the four Imams believes in less than twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh; the practice and belief of the majority of the Companions was also this. Imam Malik, (Allah's mercy be on him!) believes in more than twenty rak'ahs; he is positive that they are thirty-six. (*Arfa'sh-Shazzi*, vol. i, p. 329). It is also stated in the same book that according to Imam Malik's practice only twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh will be said in congregation but the general practice and method of the citizens of Madina was this that during the *tarveeha* (brief rest-interval), when the imam sat down after four rak'ahs, they used to perform four more rak'ahs. The men who said the Taraveeh in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca, they used to circumambulate the K'aba during this brief recess. The people of Madina, naturally, could not circumambulate the K'aba and hence, instead, they used to perform sixteen rak'ahs more during these brief recesses. (*Ibid.*, p. 329).

(6) **'Allamah Ibn Humam**: 'Allamah Ibn Humam asserts that 'it has been established from genuine authority that the Companions and their Followers-on (*taba'een*) used to say twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh during the auspicious time of Hazrat 'Umar; this authority of Yazid ibn Ruman has been reported in Imam Malik's *Mu'atta*. And Bayhaqi has reported from Hazrat Sa'ib ibn Yazid that "during Hazrat Umar's auspicious time we used to say twenty rak'ahs." The genuineness of this authority has been verified by Imam Nauvawi in the synopsis. (*Fath u'-Qadir*, vol. i, p. 407).

(7) **'Aiyini's Sharh-e Bukhari**: 'Allamah Aiyini writes in the *Sharh-e Bukhari*: "The number of rak'ahs in the Taraveeh is twenty. Imam Shafi'i and Imam Ahmed (Allah's mercy be on them!) assert the same thing. Their proof is the report which Bayhaqi has, with genuine authority, narrated from Hazrat Sa'ib ibn Yazid. The great Companions, including Hazrat 'Umar, Hazrat 'Uthman, and Hazrat 'Ali (Abpt.!), as also the revered Followers-on, used to perform twenty rak'ahs." Then he says: "The most excellent and the most advisable course to conform to is that of the Holy Prophet's and his (on him and his descendants and Companions be salutations!) Companions'." (*Umdat u'l-Qari Sharh-e Bukhari*, vol. vii, p. 178).

(8) **'Allamah Helabi**: He writes in the *Kabiri*: "It is concluded from the above discussion that, according to our conviction, the Taraveeh, undoubtedly, consists of twenty rak'ahs with ten *salams*.

and this itself is the common belief. According to Imam Malik, it has thirty-six rak'ahs. He argues from the practice of the people of Madina, and the argument of the majority of people is the report which Imam Bayhaqi has reported with sound authority that, during Hazrat 'Umar's as well as Hazrat 'Uthman's and Hazrat 'Ali's periods, twenty rak'ahs were performed. It is reported in the *Mu'atta*, on the authority of Yazid ibn Ruman, that people used to say, in Ramazan, twenty-three rak'ahs including the Vitra rak'ahs. And in the book *Al-Mughni* there is a report concerning Hazrat 'Ali that he ordered a man to lead twenty rak'ahs of prayer during the Ramazan; he said it was like consensus. Although Ibn Ruman's narration is 'cut off' (*munqata*) but, according to Imam Malik, it is a proof and hence authentic. (*Kabiri*, p. 388).

(9) Allamah Mulla 'Ali Qari: He says in *Sharh-e Al-Niqaya*: "Imam Bayhaqi has reported on genuine authority about the performing of twenty, rak'ahs of Taraveeh during the periods of Hazrat 'Umar, Hazrat 'Uthman and Hazrat 'Ali and hence there has been consensus on it." (vol. i, p. 104).

(10) Tahavi: No doubt, Imam Tahavi, in connection with three rak'ahs of the Vitra prayer, has copied a report from which a doubt arises that the rak'ahs of Taraveeh were only eight in number. But if the said Imam believed in it, he should have reproduced this report in his statement about the Taraveeh; but he did not reproduce there because he knew that there had been consensus of the Companions on twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh.

Now let us note the statements in Hadiths and of respectable traditionists and *mujtahids*:

It has been reported in the *Sunan-e Bayhaqi* on the authority of Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas (Abph.):

"Verily, the Holy Prophet (pbuh.), in the month of Ramazan, used to say twenty rak'ahs and the Vitra prayer without congregation." (vol. ii, p. 496).

This tradition of Ibn 'Abbas has been reproduced by Ibn Abi Shaybah in the *Musannaf*, by Tabrani in the *Kabiri*, by Ibn 'Adi in the *Musnad*, and by Baghawi in the *Majma'a-e Sahaba*. (*Zufajat u'l-Masabih*, vol. i, p. 366).

The rememberancer of Hadith, Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani (Allah's mercy be on him!) has reproduced from Imam 'Raf'e: "For two nights the Holy Prophet (pbuh.) led twenty rak'ahs of prayer each night; on the third night the people gathered but the Holy Prophet did not come out. Then, next morning, he told the people. It so occurred to me that it would be made obligatory for you and you would not be able to discharge this obligation."

After reproducing this tradition, Hafiz Ibn Hajar says: "All the traditionists are unanimous about the soundness of this report." (*Talkhis u'l-Khabir fi Takhrij-e Ahadith ar-Raf'e u'l-Kabir*, vol. p. 119; *Al-Hawi lil-Fatawa*, vol. ii, p. 75; *Al-Lawam'e ad-Durari Sharh-e Sahih al-Bukhari*, pp. 155-156; *Al-Inayat ala Mustakhlis u'l-Haqaiq*, p. 204, of Muhaddith al-Faqih Shaykh Akmalu'd-Din and the same is the statement of Faqih al-Muhaddith Mahmud b. 'Abdu'llah ibn Mahmud Taju' sh-Shari'ah in *Al-Kifayah ma'e al-Hedaya*, vol. i, p. 163).

It is stated in the famous book of Hanabalite jurisprudence, the *Rauz u'r-Riaz*, as under: "And the 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh is an insisted sunnah because Abu Bakr 'Abdu'l 'Aziz Shafi'i has reported from Ibn 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (pbuh.) used to perform 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh during Ramazan."

Men of Samrodi Sahib's denomination call in question Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas' afore-said tradition, saying that its authority (*sanad*) is 'weak'; but they forget that an authority is required when there is a controversy; for instance, as regards whether the Holy Prophet (pbuh.) uttered "Ameen" loudly or quietly. But when there is no controversy at all, when, since the revered 'Companions' holy period to date, unanimity of all scholarly traditionists, independently-striving Imams (*a'imma-e mujtahidin*) and eminent jurists, on whom the *ummah* relies, is found, then this unanimity, this practical continuity and this universal juridical acceptance (*talaghi bil-qubul*) is itself an authority and a very dependable authority at that. Accordingly, thousands of such quotations which prove universal juridical acceptance can be adduced, but we content ourselves by quoting a few:

(1) Imam Tirmizi (ob. A.H. 272—A.D. 892) says: "Hazrat 'Umar, Hazrat 'Ali as well as other Companions (Abpt.) and Sufyan Thauri (o.b. A.H. 161—A.D. 777/8), Ibnu'l Mubarak (o.b. A.H. 181—A.D. 797) and Imam Shafi'i (ob. A.H. 240 A.D. 820), all be-

lieved in twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh and Imam Shafi'i has stated that he had seen the people of Mecca saying twenty rak'ahs. (*Tirmizi*, vol. i, p. 99.).

(2) It is stated in the famous book of hadith, *Kanz u'l-'Ammal*, that Hazrat 'Umar bin al-Khattab ordered Hazrat Ubay b. K'ab to lead the people in prayer of twenty rak'ahs and so he led the people (Companions and their Followers) to perform twenty rak'ahs. (Vol. ii, p. 284).

(3) In the third famous book on Hadith, *the Bayhaqi*, it is stated: "Hazrat Sa'ib b. Yazid has reported that "we used to perform 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh and Vitru during Hazrat 'Umar's period." (*Bayhaqi*, vol. ii, p. 496; *Nasb u'r-Rayah*, vol. i, p. 294).

(4) The fourth famous book of hadith, *the Mu'atta* of Imam Malik, has this, reported from Hazrat Yazid ibn Ruman, that during Hazrat 'Umar's time people used to say twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh and three of Vitru, i.e., totally, twenty-three rak'ahs. (p. 40).

(5) It is stated in the *M'arifatu's-Sunnah*: Imam Bayhaqi has reported with sound authority (*sanad*) that Hazrat 'Ali called the revered Reciters (*qurra*) in the month of Ramazan and ordered one of them to lead the people for 20 rak'ahs. Hazrat 'Ali himself used to lead the Vitru prayer. (*M'arifatu's-Sunnah lil-Bayhaqi*, vol. i, p. 477; *Sunan-e Kubra lil-Bayhaqi*, vol. ii, p. 496).

(6) Muhaddith *Ibn Oudamah* writes in the book, *Al-Mughni*, that "there has been the Companions' consensus on twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh." (Vol. i, p. 803).

(7) The conclusion of Muhaddith 'Allamah *Ibn Hajar Haithami's* research is that there is unanimity among the great Companions regarding the 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh. (*Tahfat u'l-Akhyar*, p. 197).

(8) The renowned rememberancer of Hadith, 'Allamah *Ibn 'Abdu'l Barr* says: "What is correct is that the venerable (Companions used to say twenty rak'ahs during Hazrat 'Umar Farouq's time." (*Mirqat*, vol. ii, p. 174).

(9) Imam *Ibn Taymiyah* says: When the great Farouq ordered the venerable Companions to follow Hazrat Ubay b. K'ab's leader-

ship-in-prayer (*imamate*), the latter used to lead them for twenty rak'ahs. (*Mirqat*, vol. ii, p. 175).

فَلَمَّا كَانَ ذَلِكَ يَشُقُّ عَلَى النَّاسِ قَامَ أَبُو ابْنِ كَعْبٍ فِي رَمَازٍ
عُمَرُ ابْنُ الْخَطَّابِ عِشْرِينَ رَكَعَةً. يُؤْتِرُ بَعْدَهَا.

(*Fatawa-Ibn Taymiyah*, vol. I, p. 148).

Further on he makes it more explicit and says: It is proved without doubt that Hazrat Ubay b. K'ab used to lead the Companions, during Ramazan, for 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh and 3 rak'ahs of Vitru. Hence it is the principle (*maslak*) of most of the ulema that this is the Sunnah, because Hazrat Ubay b. K'ab led 20 rak'ahs of prayer in the presence of the Muhajirin (the Emigrants) and the Ansars (the Helpers) and not a single Companion repudiated it. (*Fatawa Ibn Taymiyah*, vol. i, p. 191).

This is the decree (*fatwa*) of one whom the *non-muqallids* call their religious leader! It is explicitly mentioned in this *fatwa* that the 20 rak'ahs alone is the sunnah.

(10) *Imam Sh'arani* says: "Then Hazrat 'Umar ordered for 23 rak'ahs out of which 3 were those of the Vitru prayer and this (order) was being complied with in all the countries." (*Kashfu'l-Ghummah*, vol. i, p. 167).

(11) The belief of the renowned *Ahl-e Hadith*, *Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan* of Bhopal is that "the practice of 20 rak'ahs established during Hazrat 'Umar's time has been considered by the ulema as consensus." (*Awnu'l-Bari*, vol. iv, p. 307).

(12) 'Allamah *Bahru'l-'Uloom* says: "Then there was unanimity regarding the 20 rak'ahs." (*Rasa'il u'l-Arkan*, p. 138).

(13) The rememberancer of Hadith, *Ibn Humam's* ascertainments is: "At last unanimity was formed for twenty rak'ahs of prayer and this alone is in succession." (*Fathul-Qadir*, vol. i, p. 470).

The religious leader and Imam of the *non-muqallids*, *Ibn Taymiyah* has also cited the afore-said statement. (Vide *Minhaj u's-Sunnah*, vol. ii, p. 224).

(14) Shaykh u'l-Islam 'Allamah 'Aivni cites as under:

"The venerable Companions performed twenty rak'ahs during Hazrat 'Umar's time and the same thing was practised during the periods of Hazrat 'Uthman and Hazrat 'Ali. The authority is genuine." (*Aiyani's Sharh-e Bukhari*, vol. vii, p. 178).

(15) It is stated in *Fayz-u'l-Bari Sharh-e Bukhari*: Imam Abu Yusuf asked Imam Abu Hanifa: "Did Hazrat 'Umar have any compact from the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) for the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh? The Imam replied, "Hazrat 'Umar was not one to invent on his own; certainly, he had some proof with him for this." (vol. ii, p. 420; *Maraqat u'l-Falah*, p. 81, with some change in words; *Bahr-u'r-Raiq* vol. ii, p. 66).

(16) Imam Muhammad says in his *Mu'atta*: "Hazrat 'Umar made Ubayy b. K'ab prayer-leader in Ramazan and ordered him to lead the Taraveeh. We adopt the same.....because the Muslims (the Companions) have held consensus on this (20 rak'ahs) and have approved it; and it is a saying of the Holy Prophet that whatever the Muslims (the Companions) approve is commendable in the eyes of God, too." (pp. 111-12).

(17) It is stated in *Al-Muntaqa min Akhbar-u'l-Mustafa* that "during Hazrat 'Umar's time the Companions, etc., used to say 23 rak'ahs (including the Vitra) in Ramazan." (p. 78).

(18) It is reported from Hazrat Yahya b. Sa'eed Ansari (the Qazi of Madina): "No doubt, Hazrat 'Umar b. al-Khattab ordered a man that he should lead the people for 20 rak'ahs." The authority of this hadith is *mursal* and *qavi* (i.e., one medium between Hazrat 'Umar and Yahya b. Sa'eed has been omitted and hence it is *mursal*, and it is *qavi* because the second *sanad* upto the author of the book, Ibn Shaybah, is correct). (*Athar-u's-Sunan*, vol. ii, p. 55).

(19) Hazrat 'Abdu'l-'Aziz b. Raf'e says: "During Ramazan, Hazrat Ubayy b. K'ab used to lead the people for twenty rak'ahs of prayer and three of Vitra. The *sanad* for this is *mursal-qavi*. (*Musannaf-e Ibn Abi Shaybah*, p. 406; *Athar-u's-Sunan*, vol. ii, p. 55).

(20) Hazrat Abul Khusayb says: "Hazrat Suwayd b. Ghafflah used to lead us in the prayer during Ramazan, leading us for 20 rak'ahs with five recesses (*tarveehat*). "The authority for this is *hasan* (good). (*Bayhaqi*, vol. ii, p. 496; *Athar-u's-Sunan* vol. ii, p. 55).

(21) Hazrat Shattir b. Shaki (Hazrat 'Abdu'llah b. Mas'ud's disciple) used to lead the prayer in Ramazan, performing 20 rak'ahs and 3 of Vitra. This report is *qavi* (strong). (*Bayhaqi*, vol. ii, p. 496; *Qiyam-u'l-Layl*, p. 91; *Mirqat Sharh-e Mishkat*, vol. ii, p. 174).

(22) The august Follower-on and *Mufti* of Mecca, Hazrat 'Ata b. Abi Rabah says: "I have seen the Companions, etc., all people, in Mecca, saying 23 rak'ahs, including the Vitra." The "authority for this reports is 'good'. (*Musannaf-e Ibn Abi Shaybah*, p. 406; *Fath-u'l-Bari Sharh-e Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. iv, p. 219; *Qiyam u'l-Layl*, p. 91; *Athar-u's-Sunan*, vol. i, p. 55).

(23) Hazrat Naf'e, disciple of Ibn 'Umar says: "Hazrat Ibn Abi Maleeka used to lead 20 rak'ahs of prayer." "The authority of this is 'good'." (*Athar-u's-Sunan*, vol. ii, p. 56).

(24) Hazrat A'mash says: "Hazrat 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud used to say 20 rak'ahs and 3 of Vitra." "The authority of this *mursal* is *qavi*." (*Umdat-u'l-Qari Sharh-e Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. xi, p. 127; *Qiyam u'l-Layl*, p. 91).

(25) Hazrat Abu'l Bakhtari used to say, during Ramazan, prayer with five recesses and three Vitra. (*Musannaf-e Ibn Abi Shayba*, p. 406).

(26) It is reported from Hazrat Abu'l Hasana: "Hazrat 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ordered a man to lead us for twenty rak'ahs with five recesses." (*Sunan-e Kubra lil-Bayhaqi*, vol. ii, p. 496).

(Due to 'Amr b. Qays' following, this report is 'qavi'. Vide *Al-Jauhar u'n-Naqi*, vol. i, p. 208; *Umdat u'l-Qari Sharh-e Bukhari*, vol. xi, p. 127).

(27) Hazrat Muhammad b. K'ab Qarzi said: "During Hazrat 'Umar's time the people, in Ramazan, used to say twenty rak'ahs." (*Qiyam u'l-Layl*, p. 91).

(28) Hazrat Sa'eed b. 'Ubayd says: "Ali b. Rabee'a, during Ramazan, used to lead prayer with 5 recesses (*tarveehat*), i.e., 20 rak'ahs and three Vitra." "The authority for this report is *sahih* (sound)." (*Athar-u's-Sunan*, vol. ii, p. 56).

(29) Allamah Subki Shafi'i says: "Our principle (*maslak*) consists in believing the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh an act of sunnah, which has been established by sound authority." (*Sharh-e al-Minhaj*).

(30) Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani says: "And they are twenty rak'ahs. One should sit after each two rak'ahs and say 'peace' .. and at every two rak'ahs one should intend that one is saying two rak'ahs of the approved (*masnun*) Taraveeh." (*Ghuniyat-u'l-Talibin*, vol. ii, pp. 10-11).

(31) Imam Ghazali says: "The Taraveeh consists of twenty rak'ahs. Its mode is well-known and it is an insisted sunnah." (*Ihya u'l-Ulumi*, vol. i, p. 208). "And its being of twenty rak'ahs is the statement of the majority of the ulema, because it is mentioned in the *Mu'atta* that Yazid b. Ruman said that the people, during Hazrat 'Umar's time, used to say 23 rak'ahs (including the Vitru). (Ibid., vol. ii, p. 66).

(32) Shaykh Ahmed Rumi says: "During the time when Hazrat 'Umar gathered the Companions and appointed Ubayy b. K'ab to lead the prayer, a large number of Companions were present, including 'Uthman, 'Ali, Ibn Mas'ud, 'Abbas and his son, Talha, Zubayr, Ma'az and almost all the Emigrants (*Muhajirin*) and the Helpers (*Ansars*); but no one opposed or repudiated him. On the contrary, they all favoured him, accorded with and supported him; they enforced it and continued to say it regularly so that 'Ali praised him (thanked him) and invoked good blessings upon him. After his death, 'Ali used to say: 'May Allah illuminate 'Umar's grave even as he illuminated our mosques!' The Holy Prophet (pbuh!) has said: 'Consider my mode and mine well-guided caliphs' who will succeed me, as inevitable; and the Taraveeh consists of twenty rak'ahs.' (*Majalis-u'l-Abrar*, m. 28, p. 187).

(33) Shah Valiullah Muhaddith of Delhi says that twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh had been fixed during the Companions' and the Followers'-on time. (*Hujjatu'llah il-Baligha*, vol. ii, p. 67).

(34) Shah Abdu'l 'Aziz Muhaddith of Delhi says: "Thereafter, they adopted twenty and three rak'ahs, on which number consensus had been formed." (*Majmu'a-e Fatawa 'Azizi*, vol. i, p. 126).

(35) Maulana Qutubu'd-Din Khan Muhaddith of Delhi writes: "But the Companions' consensus was formed on this that the Taraveeh consists of twenty rak'ahs." (*Mazahir-e Haq*, vol. i, p. 433).

(36) Allamah Shabbir Ahmed 'Uthmani says that none of the Companions ever took exception to the twenty rak'ahs and hence all of them were unanimous on twenty rak'ahs (*Fath u'l-Mulhim Sharh-e Sahih al-Muslim*, vol. ii, p. 320).

When, from the above-mentioned references—which are only a sample of an umpteen number—, it becomes clear as daylight that even if there was some dissent formerly, consensus was formed on twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh during Hazrat 'Umar's auspicious time and, after him, it was further reinforced during the times of the remaining two well-guided caliphs—Hazrat 'Uthman and Hazrat 'Ali; so now, one should not wonder at the following statements of scholarly traditionists and eminent jurisprudents:—

"Allamah Nauvawi, the commentator of the *Muslim*, says: "Congregational Taraveeh is the sign of Islam; it resembles the 'Id prayer." (*Nauvawi: Sharh-e Muslim*, vol. p. 259).

"One who performs eight rak'ahs of Taraveeh will be an abandoner of the insisted sunnah." (*Taliqat-e Hedaya*, vol. i, p. 131).

When it amounts to the abandonment of the sunnah, every man of faith should dread the threat and punishment for abandoning the sunnah.

Hazrat 'Ayesha (Abph.!) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (pbuh.!) said: "There are six persons on whom I invoke curses; Allah invokes curses and every exalted prophet has invoked curses; the person who interpolates in the Book of Allah; the person who falsifies Pre-destination; the person who makes a thing which God has made unlawful lawful, the person who makes lawful from amongst my progeny and descendants any one whom God has made unlawful (sacrosanct) for others; and the person who abandons the sunnah."

In contrast to this, every man of faith should cherish the good news that due to the blessings of the month of Ramazan the recompense for the sunnah of Taraveeh will be equal to that of the obligatory devotions, (*Insha Allah—If it please God!*) because the Holy Prophet (pbuh!) has said that the recompense of any good act during the month of Ramazan is received equal to that of an obligatory act. (*Mishkat*, p. 173). And may God bestow grace for doing an action which He likes and with which He is pleased!

forming is, indeed, essentially a rebellion against the Prophet. Hence, where is the scope for salvation in that path of opposition?" (*Maktabat-e Imam-e Rabbani*, vol i, pp. 102-103).

Shah 'Abdu'l 'Aziz Muhaddith of Delhi says: "In the knowing of the truth and falsehood, the criterion is the understanding of the Companions and their Followers-on (*tabi'een*).—Whatever this group has understood of the Holy Prophet's instructions from the conjunction of the spoken and actual contexts and have not found fault therewith, is worthy of acceptance." (*Fatawa 'Azizi*, vol. i, p. 157).

The glorious Tabi'i and just caliph, Hazrat 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l 'Aziz says: "The Holy Prophet (pbuh. !), too, has stipulated certain procedures and, after him his ruling successors also have fixed certain procedures the adoption of all of which is equal to confirming the Book of Allah, exercising obedience to Allah and helping the religion of Allah. Neither any one is entitled to the privilege of making any changes in them nor the opinion of those who oppose them is worth any attention. Hence, he who opposes these procedures and conducts is himself antagonistic to the methods of the men of faith. God will turn him to the same direction toward which he has set his face and then will enter him into Hell—and Hell is a very bad place!" (*At-Tashabbuh fil-Islam*, vol. ii, p. 49).

The Non-Muqallids' (Muslim recusants') Fallacious Arguments Against the 20-Rak'ah Taraveeh and their Refutation.

First Argument: It is reported on the authority of Hazrat Abu Salmah that he asked Hazrat 'Ayesha as to how the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) used to say prayer during Ramazan. She replied: "Allah's Prophet (pbuh. !) neither increased from eleven in Ramazan nor said four rak'ahs during non-Ramazan. Ask me not about their excellence and length. Then he said four rak'ahs. Ask me not about their excellence and length either. Then he would say three rak'ahs of Vitr." Hazrat 'Ayesha said (further) that she asked (the Holy Prophet): "O Prophet of Allah! You go to sleep before saying the Vitr?" He replied: "O 'Ayesha! My eyes sleep, my heart doesn't." (*Bukhari, Kitab-u't-Tahajjud*, Sect. 5, vol. i, pp. 154 and 269).

Samrodi Sahib's short-sightedness and lack of capacity in understanding Hadith, as also of other men of his ilk who claim to be experts in this subject, is truly astonishing, for Sayyida 'Ayesha

Siddiqah is talking about that prayer which is said, besides Ramazan, during all the other months throughout the year; and, obviously, the question too was about the same prayer. It was improbable that the reply of a lady like Hazrat 'Ayesha, so quick of apprehension and perspicacious in assaying the questioners' mind, would have been so inappropriate to the query. Even an ordinary man would not say such an irrelevant thing. How could it be said then by a discerning, sagacious and judicious Sayyidah 'Ayesha—the Mother of the Faithful (Abph. !). Now, it is quite evident and conspicuous that the prayer which is said during Ramazan as well as other months of the year is not Taraveeh but the Tahajjud prayer. As for the Taraveeh, a tradition from Bukhari has already been cited that the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) had led this prayer for only two nights, that the Companions came on the third night also but the Prophet did not come and did not lead the prayer. Hence, when it is stated in an authentic hadith that this prayer was held during only two nights, that the Companions participated in it, led by the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !), what is it then but wily deception to ascribe all these evidence to Tahajjud? The Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) used to say the Tahajjud prayer throughout the year, but neither the people assembled for it like this nor the Companions ever made a congregation for it nor the Holy Prophet ever led their congregation for the Tahajjud prayer. This is the reason why great divines well-versed in the Hadith lore have made it plain that Hazrat 'Ayesha Siddiqah had made this clarification about the Tahajjud prayer.

1. The commentator of the *Sahih-e Bukhari* and the erudite traditional, Shaykh Shamsu'd-Din Kermani affirms: "In the hadith, the Tahajjud prayer is meant. Abu Salmah's question and Hazrat 'Ayesha's answer concerned the Tahajjud." He adds further: "If the Tahajjud prayer is not meant, then this tradition will be at variance with the tradition that states that the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) led twenty rak'ahs each for two nights, and in the case of such clash the tradition of 20 rak'ahs which is affirmative (*muthbit*) shall have precedence because, according to the principle of Hadith, the affirmative takes precedence over the negative (*nafi*)." (*Al-Kaukab-u'd-Durari Sharh-e Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. ix, pp. 155-56).

2. Shaykh Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith of Delhi says: "The correct view is that what the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) used to say was entirely the Tahajjud prayer which consisted of eleven rak'ahs (including the Vitr)." (*Ashi'atu'l Lama'at*, vol. i, p. 544).

3. Shah 'Abdu'l Aziz Muhaddith of Delhi says : "That tradition is ascribed to the Tahajjud prayer which was the same in the month of Ramazan and non-Ramazan months." (*Majmu'a-e Fatawa 'Azizi*, vol. i, p. 125).

4. Imam Ghazali says : "The Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) has said Vitr, with one, three, five, seven, nine and eleven rak'ahs. The tradition of thirteen rak'ahs is rejected and in a rare hadith seventeen rak'ahs have been mentioned. All these rak'ahs for which we have used the word 'Vitr' the Holy Prophet used to say at night and this was the Tahajjud."

Clearer than the statements of these reputed scholars of the Hadith-lore is the fact that the Imams of the Hadith-lore have mentioned this hadith of Hazrat 'Ayesha Siddiqah (Abph. !) in the chapter on Tahajjud. (Vide *Muslim*, vol. i, p. 254; *Sunan-e Abu Da'ud*, vol. i, p. 196; *Tirmizi*, vol. i, p. 58; *Nasa'i*, vol. i, p. 154; *Mu'atta-e Imam Malik*, p. 42) Imam Muhammad b. Nasr Marwazi has quoted many traditions and narratives in the chapter on the prayers of Ramazan in his famous book, *Qiyam-u'l-Layl*, but he has not mentioned this hadith of 'Ayesha Siddiqah because this hadith, according to him, does not at all concern the Taraveeh. (Vide pp. 91-92 of this book). Hafiz-e Hadith, Ibn Qayyim, too, has mentioned it in *Zad u'l-Ma'ad* vol. i, p. 86; in connection with the Prayer of Night (Tahajjud); and if this tradition may have been quoted in some book under the devotions of Ramazan along with the Taraveeh, it is not correct to take it as a tradition regarding the Taraveeh. Like the Taraveeh, the Tahajjud, too, is a prayer of Ramazan, and because of this affinity, it can be mentioned along with the Taraveeh. Hence, supposing it may have been mentioned in some book, it cannot be made thereby a categorical argument. 'When uncertainty creeps in, the argument is falsified.'

Moreover, Hafiz-e Hadith Imam Qurtubi's statement regarding this hadith should not be overlooked that "many a man of knowledge considers the afore-said hadith 'muztarib (confounded)'. 'Aivani, Sharh-e Sahih of Bukhari, vol. vii, p. 187 New Ed.)

In short, the afore-said report is in no way a proof for eight rak'ahs of Taraveeh. In contradistinction to this, as regards the twenty rak'ahs, the Companions' consensus has taken place over the

approval of Ibn 'Abbas' hadith and practically the majority of ulema has accepted it. Imam Abu Da'ud's decision is as follows :

"When two variant hadiths are before us (like the hadiths of eight and twenty rak'ahs), it will be seen as to which one of the two the Companions' practice is in accordance with; to whichever one it is accordant, that will be acceptable and worthy of action." (*Abu Da'ud*, vol. i, p. 263).

(1) Imam Malik (Allah's mercy be on him !—ob. A. H. 199) says : "When two variant hadiths from the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) come before us and we know that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq and Hazrat 'Umar Farouq have acted on one of these and omitted the other, it will be a proof of the fact that the hadith they have acted upon is correct and true." (*Al-Taliq-u'l-Mumajjad 'ala Mu'atta-e Imam Muhammad*, p. 44).

(2) Imam Abu Da'ud Sijistani (ob. 275) says in the *Sunan-e Abu Da'ud* : "When two variant hadiths come up, it will be considered as to which one has been acted upon by the Companions; the one they have acted upon is true." (*Abu Da'ud*, vol. i, p. 263).

(3) The Imam-e Mujtahid Abu Bakr Jassas (Allah's mercy be on him !—ob. A. H. 370) says : "If two variant hadiths may have been reported from the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) and if one of these may have been acted upon by the predecessors, the same will be worthier of confirmation." (*Ahkam-u'l-Quran lil-Jassas*, vol. i, p. 17).

(4) Imam Bayhaqi (Allah's mercy be on him !—ob. A. H. 458) reports from Uthman Darmi : "When variant hadiths may have been listed under one head and there is no certainty as to which one is preferable, we shall see the well-guided Caliphs' action and give preference according to it, i.e., we shall conform to it." (*Fath u'l-Bari Sharh-e Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. ii, p. 269).

(5) The *muhaddith* Khatib Baghdadi (ob. A. H. 463) reports in his history from Imam Malik (Allah have mercy on him !) : "Had this hadith been conformed to, that if the imam should (due to some legal excuse) say prayers sitting, the followers (*muqtadi*) should also do likewise, then the imams succeeding the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !), that is, Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat 'Umar and Hazrat 'Uthman too

would have surely conformed to it." (*Tarikh-e Baghdad*, vol. vi, p. 247, Egyptian Ed.).

(6) The research-scholar (*muhaqqiq*) Ibn Humam (Allah's mercy be on him!—ob. A. H. 861) says: "One of the factors from which the authenticity of a hadith is known is that the learned (ulema) may conform to it, which is a proof of its being sound." (*Fath-u'l-Qadir*, vol. iii, p. 349).

(7) Shah Valiullah Muhaddith of Delhi (Allah's mercy be on him!—ob. A. H. 1176) says: "The predecessors' unanimity and their successive practice is the great basis in jurisprudence." (*Izalat-u'l-Khifa*, vol. ii, p. 85, Bareilly Ed.).

(8) Shah 'Abdu'l Aziz Muhaddith of Delhi (ob. A. H. 1239) writes: "In the knowing of the truth and falsehood, the criterion is the understanding of the Companions and their Followers-on (*tabi'een*). Whatever this group has understood of the Holy Prophet's instructions from the conjunction of the spoken and actual contexts and have not found fault therewith, is worthy of acceptance." (*Majmu'a-e Fatawa 'Azizi* vol. i, p. 157).

Second Argument: Samrodi Sahib is very proud of Hazrat Jabir's tradition concerning eight rak'ahs (*Qiyam-u'l-Layl* p. 90) and shows himself ready for imprecation (*mubahila*). But the strange thing about this hadith is that its chain of authorities is not trustworthy. Please examine the statements of the imams of this science concerning the narrators of this chain. In this chain one narrator is Ibn Hameed Razi about whom the opinions of the great and august critics of *hadith* are as under:

1. "He is weak" (Hafiz Zahabi).
2. "He narrates many disowned (*munkar*) hadiths." (Y'aqub b. Shaybah).
3. "He is objectionable." (Imam Bukhari).
4. "He is a liar." (Abu Zar'ah).
5. "I testify that he is a liar." (Ishaq Kausaj).
6. "He narrates hadiths about everything; I have not seen a man bolder than him vis-a-vis God. He changes the hadiths of others." (Sauleh Jazrah).
7. "By God! he is a liar." (Ibn Kharash).
8. "He is not reliable." (Imam Nasa'i in *Mizan-u'l-A'etidal*, vol. iii, pp. 49-50).

Now, about the second narrator, 'Y'aqub b. 'Abdu'llah Ash'ari al-Qummi:—

1. "He is not strong." (Darqutni in *Mizan-u'l-A'etidal*, vol. iii, p. 324).

About the third narrator, 'Isa b. Jariyah:—

1. "He has had disowned hadiths." (Ibn Mo'een).
2. "His hadiths are disavowed." (Nasa'i).
3. "His hadiths are rejected (*matruk*)." (Nasa'i).
4. "His hadiths are disavowed." (Abu Da'ud—synopsis).
5. "He is counted among the weak." (*Mizan-u'l-A'etidal*, vol. ii, p. 311).

It has been reported in the *Bulugh-u'l-Maram* from Hazrat Jabir that the number of rak'ahs is not at all there. (Vide pp. 42-43). The other confusion (*istirab*) is this that there is mention of the Holy Prophet's not coming out for the apprehension that the Vitru might be made compulsory, whereas in authentic hadiths there is mention of the Taraveeh. (*Mizan-u'l-A'etidal*, vol. ii, pp. 42-43).

Such is the capital of the protagonists of the eight rak'ahs declining on which they are opposing the twenty rak'ahs and ruining their lives in the Hereafter! Alas!

Couplet:

'Look at their stupidity; they throw stones from a house of glass on a wall of steel!

(239) Samrodi Sahib's "squire" regarding the twenty rak'ahs of Taraveeh and its refutation.

O.: The *ghayr-muqallid* moulvi, 'Abdu'l Jalil Samrodi asserts that Maulana 'Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith of Delhi has written on page 327 of his book, *Fath-e-Sirr-u'l-Mannan*, that the tradition of twenty rak'ahs is not provable from any of the Holy Prophet's statements (pbuh.!). Please write if this is correct and also show what the Indian ulema, Shah Valiullah's and Shah 'Abdu'l 'Aziz—conduct (*maslak*) has been in this respect. What is the proof for twenty rak'ahs? Please clarify this matter.

A.: Shaykh 'Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith of Delhi did never believe that Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas' tradition is altogether absurd. 'Glory

be to God! This is a great accusation. On the contrary, he is actually supporting this tradition. It is absolutely wrong to assert that he was an opponent of the 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh. He is, in fact, convinced of the 20 rak'ahs; no statement or action of his against the 20 rak'ahs is traceable. Not only he but reputed and acknowledged traditions of India like Shah Valiullah and Qazi Thanau'llah of Panipat and hundreds of others also believe in the practice of 20 rak'ahs. The saying of less than twenty is not provable from any one. (Vide *Hujjatu'llahil-Baligha*, vol. ii, p. 67; *Majmu'a-e Fatawa 'Azizi*, vol. i, p. 125; *Mala bud Minho*, p. 63).

Shaykh 'Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith of Delhi writes in his book, *Fath-e Sirr-u'l-Mannan*: "The obvious thing is that, according to the holy Companions, the Holy Prophet's saying twenty rak'ahs had been established, as is mentioned in Ibn 'Abbas' tradition, and for this reason Hazrat 'Umar adopted twenty rak'ahs." He adds: "The correct view is that what the Holy Prophet (pbuh.!) used to say was entirely his Tahajjud prayer, which consists of eleven rak'ahs; and Ibn Abi Shaybah reports on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the prayer performed by the Holy Prophet consisted of 20 rak'ahs." (*Ashi'at u'l-Lama'at*, vol. i, p. 547). And he says: "Because it has been authentically proved that they (the Companions) performed twenty rak'ahs during 'Umar's time." (Ibid, p. 547). In his book, *Ma-Sabata-Minas-Sunnah*, he has written that "according to our belief, the Taraveeh consists of 20 rak'ahs, for Bayhaqi has reported with sound authority that the holy Companions used to perform 20 rak'ahs during Hazrat 'Umar's time; moreover, this practice continued during Hazrat 'Uthman's and Hazrat 'Ali's periods also." (p. 223).

This is the real position and his belief. Can any same man aver that Shaykh 'Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith calls Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas' tradition "altogether absurd" and that he was against twenty rak'ahs? The fact is that Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas and Hazrat 'Umar are both Companions; there is no 'weak' narrator between them wherefore Ibn 'Abbas' tradition may be called weak and the Companions' action may be considered to be based on a weak tradition. Their action was based on sound basis; how can then those who follow them be called 'the deluded'? In short, according to the Companions' reckoning, the afore-said hadith is not at all weak, though, due to the inclusion later on of a weak narrator. Ibrahim b. 'Uthman, it may be, according to the latter-day authorities, called weak 'by

way of narration', but 'intelligibly' it must needs be authentic because the well-guided Caliphs' and other Companions' conformity to and continuance of 20 rak'ahs is the proof of its being reliable. 'Allamah Bahr-u'l-'Ulum says: "The Companions' continued conformity to 20 rak'ahs is the context and sign of the soundness of this tradition." (*Rasa'il-u'l-Arkan*, p. 138).

The Holy Prophet's constant companions and participators in devotions—the Companions' last and consistent practice has been the performance of 20 rak'ahs. Note what Imam Tirmizi says: "There has been difference of opinion among men of knowledge (the traditionists) regarding (the number of) the rak'ahs of Taraveeh. Some maintain that including Vitr it consists of 41 rak'ahs, as is the assertion and practice of the people of Madina; but the belief of the majority (of savants) is that which is reported and cited from Hazrat 'Umar, Hazrat 'Ali and other Companions, that it comprises 20 rak'ahs. This is also the assertion of the Imam-u'l-Hadith Sufyan al-Thauri and Ibn-u'l-Mubarak and Imam Shafi'i; the latter says that he has seen the people of Mecca performing 20 rak'ahs also. (Tirmizi, vol. i, p. 99). On account of these statements of 'the Imams of Narration', we should be convinced that Ibrahim b. 'Uthman is truthful in respect of the 20 rak'ahs of Taraveeh. It is out and out unjust and wrong to go on falsifying a work that may have been correctly corroborated (by the Companions' practice). In so far as the traditionists' controversy is concerned, it is a legal debate which does not imply that they were against the 20 rak'ahs and that they did not say 20 rak'ahs. Shaykh 'Abdu'l Haq Muhaddith of Delhi, Ibn 'Humam, etc. are cited as opponents but their performance of less than twenty rak'ahs is not provable.

It should also be remembered here that conforming to the venerable Companions' pattern, particularly that of the well-guided Caliphs', is necessary for us. The Most High Allah says:

"O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority." (Surah IV, *Nisa*: 59).

The Well-guided Caliphs are the foremost object of the term: *Olul-Amr* (Vide *Tafsir-e Fath-u'l-Bayan fi Maqasid-u'l-Quran*, vol. i, p. 585, of the Imam of the Ahl-e Hadith, Maulana Siddiq Hasan Khan).

And the divine directive is :

"And whatsoever the messenger giveth you, take it." (Surah LIX *Hashr* 7). The Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) has said that "the people who live after me will see many dissensions ; at that time, it is the duty of the Muslims to hold mine and my Well-guided Caliphs pattern firmly." (*Abu Da'ud*, vol. ii, p. 278).

On account of the above-mentioned Quranic verses and hadiths, it becomes necessary for us to obey and submit to the Well-guided Caliphs and the Companions. Besides there is also the Holy Prophet's sublime directive that "follow Abu Bakr and 'Umar after me." (*Mishkat*, p. 560) ; and he had also said : "My Companions are like stars ; whomsoever you may follow, you will have received guidance." (*Ibid*. p. 554).

It is stated in Imam Muhammad's *Mu'atta* : "The pattern approved by true believers is approved by God also ; the pattern I and my Companions conform to is right and leads to absolution." (*Mishkat*, p. 30).

The Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) has said : "Keep hold of Ibn Mas'ud's advice firmly", that is, comply with his advice fully. (*Tirmizi*, vol. ii, p. 221).

Now, what is Ibn-Mas'ud's advice in respect of the Companions ? What he says is as under :

"If you have to conform to and follow anyone, follow the Holy Prophet's Companions only. The Most High God has approved this select group for the company of His best prophet and for the establishment of the religion. Hence, recognise their superiority (augustness) and follow in their footsteps only ; they were on the straight and clear path." (*Al-Muwafiqat*, vol. iv. p. 78).

And Hazrat Hasan is testifying : "By the Lord of this K'aba ! this group of Companions was well-ensconced on the straight path." (*Ibid.*, from *Tarjuman-u's-Sunnah*, vol. i).

Imam-e Rabbani Mujaddid Alf-e Thani says that the Holy Prophet's statement regarding the sect which will receive salvation is :

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَانَا كَالْمُهَادِّينَ i.e. "the sect that is to be absolved is that which is on mine and my Companions' path." Then the Mujaddid Sahib adds : Apparently, it was sufficient to say : "the path on which I am" ; but along with himself the Holy Prophet (pbuh. !) mentioned the Companions also. The reason for this is to emphasize that "my Companions' path is the same which is mine." Hence the path of salvation is contingent upon compliance with them, even as the Most High God has said : "He who obeyed the prophet, obeyed God." That is, to obey the Prophet is to obey God and to disobey him is essentially to commit disobedience to God. Similarly, to claim of conforming to the Holy Prophet's method and simultaneously oppose to conform to the Companions' pattern makes such claim null and void ; on the contrary, such conforming to him will, in fact, be reckoned as disobedience to him. Where is then, in such a case, left any scope for salvation ? And "they will fancy that they have some standing. Lo ! is it not they who are the liars ?" (Surah LVIII, *Mujadilah* : 28). This is their condition, and there is no doubt whatsoever that the sect which has made compliance with the Holy Prophet and his Companions binding upon itself, that alone is the *Ahl-as Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah*. May Most High Allah approve and appreciate its efforts ! (*Muktubat, maktub* 80 vol. i, p. (103).

In his precious letter quoted by traditionists with *isnad* (chain of authorities) Hazrat 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l 'Aziz (ob. A. H. 101) says that "you also adopt the same opinion and belief which the respectable Companions have adopted for themselves and make it your procedure (*maslak*), because the Companions were fully aware and informed of the knowledge the Last of the Prophets and Messengers (pbuh. !) had brought from Allah. They had perfect insight in and acute understanding of religion wherefore they perceived the reality of every thing, the reality of religion and the purpose of the shari'ah more than you do. In spite of this, if you think that (in your difference of opinion with the Companions) you are in the right, it will mean that you consider yourselves superior even to the Companions' group. Obviously, how stupid and misleading this thought is !" (*Abu Da'ud*, vol ii, p. 285).

Once Hazrat 'Ali began to remonstrate with the Khwarij. They said they would obey only the Quran's command and that they did not want to listen to any other argument. Hazrat 'Ali took the Quran in his hand and said : "O Quran ! Speak and explain to them

the matter they are controverting." Then he said to the Khwarij : "Did you see that the Quran, inspite of my asking it, did not say anything?" (He meant that the only way of obeying the Quran is to comply with whatever those who know it and are well-versed in it say ; this alone is true compliance with the Quran). Then he said : "You dolts ! Do you think you know the Quran and the religion more than those who have directly received these things from the Prophet of God ?"

In short, those who perform twenty rak'ahs of the Taraveeh are in the right ; they are those who are the true compliants of Allah's commands, His Prophet's authentic hadiths and reliable tradition ; they are not 'the deluded ones'. The deluded ones are those who say less than twenty rak'ahs, for they are deprived in the holy month of Ramazan of a prayer on which there has been unanimity and consensus of the well-guided caliphs, Companions Followers-on, Followers of Followers, pious predecessors as well as subsequent and present-day posterity. To discard authentic hadiths by complying with a hadith that has had other uncertainties, is not trustworthiness ; trustworthy is he who conforms to and acknowledges all hadiths.

For God's sake, let people say twenty rak'ahs ; don't prevent them from devotions and perform 20 rak'ahs yourself ; if you wish, consider it a practice of the well-guided Caliphs, but perform it. 'It is not but by his (pbuh. !) order'.

Below is given for your perusal the decisive *fetwa* regarding the 20 rak'ahs (of Taraveeh) of the founder of the Dar-u'l-'Ulum of Deoband, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi :

Q : It is submitted to the religious divines (for opinion) that a resident of Khalan Dharaper, Nagina, Distt. Bijnore, has come here and he says that we should pronounce 'duad' with the sound of 'za' otherwise our prayer would be rendered invalid ; and that we should say only 8 rak'ahs of Taraveeh, for to say 20 rak'ahs is simply useless.

(The Maulana's answer regarding the Taraveeh only is given below).

A : As for the Taraveeh, the pseudo-mullahs of today have made reduction in it ; i.e., they have reduced it from 20 to 8, which is liked by all due to its convenience. No one understands this thing

that the statement of 8 rak'ahs in the hadith is about the rak'ahs of Tahajjud, and Tahajjud and Taraveeh are two things ; as for the Taraveeh, it comprises nothing less than 20 rak'ahs.

Thousands of Companions were alive during Hazrat 'Umar's time ; since then to date no one ever called the 20 rak'ahs into question (which they used to say gladly). But there have come into being nowadays such unlettered and ignorant 'ulema who have falsified even Hazrat 'Umar and the Companions ! "A dwarf threatens Hercules." It is wrong to think that 20 rak'ahs were not performed prior to Hazrat 'Umar's time. If they began to perform 20 rak'ahs with special care during Hazrat 'Umar's time, how does it follow that they were not said before that ? Of course, the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh was not performed with such care and in such large congregation, which Hazrat 'Umar started by merging all the separate and small groups of prayers (*namazis*) into one.

It may be noted that formerly so much endeavour was not made for the re-marriage (of widows or divorced women) because it was not considered that reprehensible then. When Shah Valiu'llah of Delhi marked that the people had begun to consider the second marriage so improper, he discussed this problem in his books and his descendants and disciples girt up their waists to restart the practice of second marriage ; but it does not mean that the custom of second marriage is the invention of Shah Valiu'llah and his family and does not date back to the Holy Prophet's time. So, similarly, the 20-rak'ah Taraveeh is not the invention of Hazrat 'Umar and his contemporary Companions but it should be, in fact, considered the Prophet's sunnah, otherwise it would mean that Hazrat 'Umar as well as the Companions contemporaneous with him were not Sunnites—all of them (God forbid !) were innovators who obliterated the Holy Prophet's sunnah and installed their own instead. Now decide it yourself what sort of men are those who consider Hazrat 'Umar and the honourable Companions vicious ? The order to conform to Hazrat 'Umar and the venerable Companions exists in authentic hadiths themselves. Below I quote a few. You may ask their meaning from the non-muqallid moulvi who goes about pronouncing the 8 rak'ahs and calls 20 rak'ahs superfluous :—

(۱) عَلَيكَ بِسُنَّتِي وَ سُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي (۲) اِقْتَدُوا بِالَّذِينَ
(۳) مِنْ بَعْدِي (۴) اَصْحَابِي كَالْتَجْوَرِ بِاَيِّهِمْ اِقْتَدُوا هُمْ اَهْتَدُوا بِتَرْتَرِ

(*Tasfiyat-u'l-'Aqa'id*, pp. 38-39).